

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

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TAGS: PINT, TU

SUBJECT: IMPRESSIONS OF REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S (RPP) AND JUSTICE PARTY
(JP) RALLIES IN ISTANBUL

SUMMARY: THE TWO MAJOR CONTENDERS IN THE OCT 14 TURKISH
GENERAL ELECTIONS, THE REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S (RPP) AND THE
JUSTICE (JP) PARTIES HELD THEIR BIG ISTANBUL RALLIES IN
TAKSIM SQUARE ON OCT 11 AND 12 RESPECTIVELY. ALTHOUGH NEWS-
PAPER REPORTS OF CROWD ATTENDANCE GROSSLY EXAGGERATED, THERE
NO DOUBT THAT JP LEADER DEMIREL'S PERFORMANCE PALED BEFORE
RPP LEADER BULENT ECEVIT'S EXTREMELY EFFECTIVE SPEECH TO
ENTHUSIASTIC CROWD ON PREVIOUS DAY. IF GROUP ATTITUDES AT
RALLIES MEAN ANYTHING, JP WILL BE FACING STIFF COMPETITION
AT BALLOT BOX OCT 14. END SUMMARY

1. IN THE PAST TWO DAYS, OCT 11 AND 12, THE REPUBLICAN
PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP) AND JUSTICE PARTY (JP) HELD THEIR MAJOR
RALLIES IN ISTANBUL'S TAKSIM SQUARE. IN TERMS OF ORGANIZA-
TION, CROWD ENTHUSIASM, ATTENDANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF
PRESENTATION, RPP LEADER BULENT ECEVIT CLEARLY OUTSHONE JP'S
SULLEYMAN DEMIREL IN OPINION CONGEN OFF WHO ATTENDED BOTH
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RALLIES.

2. ALTHOUGH BOTH ECEVIT AND DEMIREL DELAYED THEIR ARRIVAL BY AN HOUR IN ORDER TO ALLOW A LARGE CROWD TO GATHER, IT WAS ONLY EFFECTIVE IN RPP'S CASE. LOCAL RPP PARTY ORGANIZATION HAD MARSHALED WELL DISCIPLINED GROUPS OF LOCAL YOUTH AND WORKERS TO MARCH INTO TAKSIM CHANTING QTE POPULIST ECEVIT UNQTE AND QTE INDEPENDENT TURKEY UNQTE. THESE CADRES WERE DISTRIBUTED THROUGHOUT CROWD, WHICH FILLED ABOUT THREE QUARTERS OF TAKSIM SQUARE. THANKS TO EFFECTIVE WARM-UP BY A COMPETENT MASTER OF CEREMONIES AND A POPULAR SINGER, CROWD WAS IN EXUBERANT MOOD WHEN QTE KARAOGLAN UNQTE (QTE THE DARK BOY, UNQTE ECEVIT'S NICKNAME) ARRIVED.

3. ECEVIT'S SPEECH CENTERED ON WELL KNOWN CAMPAIGN THEME: ONLY THE NEW RPP WHICH REPRESENTED THE PEOPLE COULD BRING PEACE AND STABILITY TO TURKEY. HE REPEATEDLY ACCUSED THE JP AND DEMIREL FOR THEIR RESPONSIBILITY IN CREATING QTE ANARCHY UNQTE BY FAVORING RICH AND CRUSHING FREEDOM AND RIGHTS OF QTE THE PEOPLE. UNQTE ECEVIT BLAMED DEMIREL PERSONALLY FOR THE MARCH 12, 1973 MEMORANDUM AND THE CURTAILMENT OF BASIC LIBERTIES OF SPEECH AND ASSOCIATION WHICH FOLLOWED. HE CHARGED THAT DEMIREL WANTS TO RETURN TO POWER FOR SOLE PURPOSE OF COMPLETING HIS ABRIDGEMENT OF FREEDOM. ECEVIT INSISTED THAT ONLY RPP PROGRAM WOULD STOP COMMUNISM, WHICH SPRINGS FROM FRUSTRATIONS OF YOUTH AND WORKERS OVER DISCRIMINATORY SYSTEM AND FROM FOREIGN EXPLOITATION, AS EXAMPLES OF LATTER HE CITED CUBA AND CHILE AS COUNTRIES THAT HAD TURNED TO MARXISM BECAUSE US HAD EXPLOITED CUBA'S SUGAR AND CHILE'S MINERAL WEALTH TO DETRIMENT OF INHABITANTS. AN RPP GOVT WOULD ENSURE THAT SAME DID NOT OCCUR IN TURKEY.

4. THROUGHOUT SPEECH ECEVIT WAS INTERRUPTED BY SPONTANEOUS RHYTHMIC CHANTING OF QTE HALKCI ECEVIT UNQTE (POPULIST ECEVIT), AND QTE ECEVIT BASBAKAN UNQTE (ECEVIT PRIME MINISTER). HE WON WILD CHEERS FROM CROWD WHEN HE TOOK OFF HIS JACKET TO ADDRESS THE QTE PEOPLE UNQTE MORE COMFORTABLY. AT TIMES IN SPEECH HE STOPPED TO JOIN IN CHANTING OF RPP SLOGANS, WHICH OCCASIONALLY HAD NEARLY MESMERIZING EFFECT ON CROWD. ECEVIT SPOKE FOR HOUR AND A HALF, DURING WHICH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HE NEVER LOST HIS HOLD OF THE CROWD, WHICH WAS SUFFICIENTLY LARGE TO TIE UP TRAFFIC FOR LONG TIME ROADS LEADING TO TAKSIM. MEETING BROKE UP IN JUBILANT FASHION.

5. IN CONTRAST JUSTICE PARTY RALLY WAS DOWNRIGHT DULL. DESPITE ADVANCE BILLING--MOST OBVIOUS MANIFESTATION OF WHICH IS VAST SIDEWALK LITTER OF THOUSANDS OF CARDS CARRYING DEMIREL'S PHOTOGRAPH--ATTENDANCE WAS BETWEEN

HALF AND TWO THIRDS OF CROWD THAT GREETED ECEVIT. WHEREAS ECEVIT CROWD WAS MAINLY STUDENTS, WORKERS, AND ASSORTED CITIZENS FOR MOST PART UNDER FORTY, DEMIREL'S AUDIENCE APPEARED TO BE MADE UP OF VILLAGERS BROUGHT IN FROM NEIGHBORING COUNTRYSIDE AND A LARGE PERCENTAGE OF CURIOUS SPECTATORS. UNLIKE THE ECEVIT RALLY, FEW WOMEN CAME TO SEE DEMIREL. WHEN DEMIREL ARRIVED, ONLY MODERATE APPLAUSE HEARD, AND MOST OF THIS FROM PARTY FAITHFUL GROUPED AROUND ROSTRUM.

6. DUE TO A FAULTY PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEM AND A HORSE VOICE DEMIREL'S SPEECH WAS VIRTUALLY INAUDIBLE EXCEPT NEAR ROSTRUM. CONGEN PERSONNEL THEREFORE UNABLE TO COMMENT AT THIS POINT ON CONTENT. IT QUITE CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT EVEN THOSE WHO HEARD HAD TO BE URGED TO CHEER OCCASIONALLY. WHEREAS ECEVIT HAD DIFFICULTY AT TIMES

SILENCING CHEERING CROWD, DEMIREL WOULD PAUSE AND WAIT FOR THE CHEERS WHICH SELDOM CAME. SINCE DEMIREL IMPOSSIBLE PSH QBG HO# CONGEN REPRESENTATIVES DID NOT STAY UNTIL RALLY ENDED.

7. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH RALLIES ARE NOT NECESSARILY ACCURATE REFLECTION OF VOTER SENTIMENT, CONTRAST BETWEEN RPP AND JP MEETINGS WAS MORE PRONOUNCED THAN MIGHT HAVE BEEN EXPECTED. CONSIDERING FINANCIAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE, THE JP MOUNTED A SURPRISINGLY POORLY ORGANIZED GATHERING. JP RALLY SO LACKLUSTER THAT ONE OLD MAN WEARING JP PROPAGANDA SAID QTE WE CAN'T HEAR YOU, BUT NEVER MIND, SULLEYMAN BEY, WE ALREADY KNOW WHAT YOU ARE GOING TO SAY UNQTE. IF THIS ATTITUDE IS CARRIED BY MANY VOTERS TO THE BALLOT-BOX, THE JUSTICE PARTY, IN ISTANBUL AT LEAST, HAS CAUSE TO WORRY.

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